

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for characterizing a nucleic acid-protein interaction comprising:

- (a) immobilizing a nucleic acid or a protein within a solid support;
- (b) contacting the immobilized nucleic acid with a protein in aqueous solution or contacting the immobilized protein with a nucleic acid in aqueous solution under conditions which allow the immobilized nucleic acid and the protein or the immobilized protein and the nucleic acid to interact; and
- (c) measuring the strength of the nucleic acid-protein interaction, if any; and
- (d) repeating steps (a) through (c) one or more times, wherein the nucleic acid, protein, or both used in repeated steps (a) through (c) are different from the respective nucleic acid, protein, or both used in the first iteration.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of ss RNA, ds RNA, ss DNA, ds DNA and PNA.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the solid support is a gel pad.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the strength of the nucleic acid-protein interaction is measured through Tm or a change in Tm.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the strength of the nucleic acid-protein interaction is measured through fluorescence or a change in fluorescence.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the immobilized nucleic acid sequence and nucleic acid sequence in aqueous solution are selected from the group

consisting of a nucleic acid having a predetermined sequence and nucleic acid not having a predetermined sequence.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the immobilized protein and protein in aqueous solution are selected from the group of proteins consisting of a predetermined protein and a protein which is not predetermined.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the nucleic acid does not have a predetermined sequence further comprising determining the sequence of the nucleic acid.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the protein is not predetermined further comprising determining the identity of the protein.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the nucleic acid sequence is a nucleic acid encoding a functional nucleic acid sequence.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein the functional nucleic acid sequence is a promoter or gene.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the protein modulates the activity or expression of a gene or gene product.

15-16. (Canceled)